

23. (New) A method according to claim 21, wherein the special service calls are associated with a terminating special service number that includes one of a toll-free number, a calling card number, and a special rate number.

AB
Connell 24. (New) A method according to claim 21, wherein the common originating number in the monitoring step originates from a private branch exchange (PBX) communicating with the second telephone network.

25. (New) A method according to claim 21, further comprising:
selectively forwarding the subsequent special service call for further processing in an Intelligent Service Network (ISN) platform; and
selectively tearing down the subsequent special service call.

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1-5, 7-14, 17, 18, and 21-25 are pending, in which claims 6, 15, 16, 19, and 20 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, claims 21-25 are newly presented, and claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10, 11-14, 17, and 18 are amended. Care was exercised to avoid the introduction of new matter.

The Office Action mailed August 27, 2002 rejected claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by *Rangachar* (US 5,495,521), claim 9 as obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on *Rangachar* in view of *McConnell* (US 5,436,957).

Applicants note that a discrepancy exists in the Office Action with respect to the rejection of claim 9. On page 2, the Office Action indicates in the introductory paragraph that claim 9 is

included in the § 102 rejection. However, claim 9 is omitted from the detailed explanation. However, the Office Action (on page 3) clearly indicates that claim 9 is rejected under § 103.

Applicants have canceled independent claim 6. Additionally, Applicants have amended each of the independent claims 1 and 10 to clarify the relationship between two telephone networks, namely an inter-exchange carrier network (IXC) and a local exchange carrier (LEC) network. Accordingly, amended claim 1 recites “storing an originating phone number associated with the call in **a database within an inter-exchange carrier network** if the call is suspicious” and “providing the suspicious originating phone number to **another database accessible by the local exchange carrier network.**” Claim 10 is now directed to a fraud prevention system for **blocking special service calls within an inter-exchange carrier network,**” and recites “means for blocking a special service call **originating from a local exchange carrier network.**”

The Office Action, on page 2, contends that the TSN could be a long distance carrier and ADS could be the local exchange in the *Rangachar* system. Applicants respectfully disagree as there is no support for such a contention. *Rangachar* discloses, on col. 2, lines 46-56, that a telephone switch network TSN connects a caller, or access demand source, ADS to a called party or egress EGR through two switches or central offices, namely, an originating action control point ACPO and a terminating action control point ACPT. The originating action control point ACPO and the termination action control point ACPT communicate with call detail recording platforms (CDRPs) RP1 and RP2 to supply the latter continuously with call detail records on a real-time basis. The action control points ACPO and ACPT generate these records for billing and record keeping by the CDRPs.

Based on the above passage, the ADS is simply the “caller, or access demand source,” and the ER is the “called party or egress EGR.” Thus, the ADS and the ER cannot be the LEC as

they are not switches or central offices; the only disclosure of such systems is the ACPO and ACPT.

In light of the above discussion, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under § 102 be withdrawn, as anticipation under 35 U.S.C. § 102 requires that each and every element of the claim be disclosed in a prior art reference. Accordingly, claims 1 and 10, and corresponding dependent claims 2-9, and 11-17, should be indicated as allowable.

As regards the obviousness rejection of claim 9, Applicants note that the secondary reference of *McConnell* does not cure the deficiencies of *Rangachar*, as discussed above. The Office Action merely applies *McConnell* for its supposed teaching of SS7. The obviousness rejection is thus unsustainable.

With respect to newly added claims 21-25, independent claim 21 is directed to method for preventing fraud in processing special service calls. Specifically, claim 21 recites “monitoring a plurality of special service calls initiated from a common originating number, wherein the special service calls are processed by a first telephone network,” and “transmitting the stored originating number to another database accessible by a second telephone network for blocking within the second telephone network.” These features are lacking in the applied references of *Rangachar* and *McConnell*, either singly or in combination. Therefore, new claim 21 should be allowable. Further, new claims 22-25 depending from claim 21 should also be allowable. These dependent claims are also separately patentable on their own merits.

Therefore, the present application, as amended, overcomes the rejections of record and is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested. If any unresolved issues remain, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney at (703) 425-8508 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

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APPENDIX

1. (Amended) A method for preventing fraud associated with a special service call [fraud in a telephone network], the method comprising the steps of:

storing an originating phone number associated with the call in a database within an inter-exchange carrier network if the call is suspicious, the call originating from a local exchange carrier network and terminating at a special service call number;

[a] maintaining at least one record, each record associated with a special service call number;

b) adding an originating number identification to a record; and]

determining whether a subsequent call to the special service call number corresponds to the stored originating phone number;

[c)] blocking [all calls to a] the subsequent call to the terminating special service call number[, when an origin of the special services call is indicated by the originating number identification in the record associated with said special service call number.] if the subsequent call corresponds to the stored originating phone number; and

providing the suspicious originating phone number to another database accessible by the local exchange carrier network.

2. (Amended) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the [at least one record of step (a) is maintained in] database is a Service Management System (SMS) database.

3. (Amended) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the originating phone number [identification] is an Automatic Number Identification (ANI).

4. (Unamended) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the terminating special service call number is an "800" number.

5. (Amended) The method as recited in claim 1, [wherein step (b)] further [comprises] comprising the steps of:

[selecting at least one] designating a threshold for suspicious call activity;
monitoring calls on the [network] inter-exchange carrier network; and
[placing the originating number identification in the record of a terminating special services call, when network activity associated with the originating number surpasses said at least one threshold in relation to the terminating special services call] determining that the call is suspicious if the threshold is exceeded.

6. (Cancelled) [A method for preventing special service call fraud in a long distance telephone system, said telephone system connected to Local Exchange Carriers (LECs) for carrying local telephone traffic, comprising the steps of:

a) maintaining at least one record, each record associated with a terminating special service call number,
b) adding an identification of a number originating in a LEC to a record; and
c) blocking all calls to a terminating special service call number, when an origin of the special services call is indicated by the originating number identification in the record associated with said special service call number.]

7. (Amended) The method as recited in claim [6] 1, further comprising the step of:

routing the [special service calls] call [through the long distance telephone system] to a bridge switch within the inter-exchange carrier network, [said] the bridge switch being under the control of a call processing platform[, said call processing platform performs the blocking of step (c)] that is configured to block the call.

8. (Amended) The method as recited in claim [6] 1, further comprising the step of:
routing the special service [calls] call through the [long distance telephone system using] inter-exchange carrier network at [least] an automated switch[, said automated switch] under [the] control [or] of an automatic switching and routing control system.

9. (Unamended) The method as recited in claim 8, wherein the automatic switching and routing control system is Signaling System 7 (SS7).

10. (Amended) A [device] fraud prevention system for [preventing] blocking special service [call fraud in a telephone system] calls within an inter-exchange carrier network, comprising:

a database for maintaining [at least one record, each] a record associated with [one] a special service call number[,] ;

means for entering an originating phone number [identifications] into [said records] the record, wherein the originating phone number is identified as suspicious; and

means for blocking a special service call originating from a local exchange carrier network[, said special service call having an originating number corresponding to an originating

number identification in the special service call number record] placed to the special service call number if the call is associated with the originating phone number.

11. (Amended) The [device] system as recited in claim 10, wherein the means for blocking further comprises:

[means for retrieving and storing said records from said database;]

means for [contacting said means for retrieving and storing, for] extracting [information from said means for retrieving and storing,] the originating phone number in the record from the database and for sending [said information to at least one] the originating phone number to a switch within the inter-exchange carrier network to block the call]; and

at least one switch for switching calls, for receiving said information said means for contacting, and for blocking special service calls when said information indicates to do so;

wherein, when a special service call is made from an originating number to a corresponding special service call number, and a record for the corresponding special service call number has an originating number identification corresponding to said originating number, the information sent to the at least one switch indicates to block the special service call].

12. (Amended) The [device] system as recited in claim 11, wherein the database is a Service Management System (SMS) database, the means for [retrieving is] extracting includes a Service Control Point (SCP), and [the means for contacting is] a Service Switching and Control Point (SSCP), [in a] wherein the SCP and the SSCP communicate according to a Signalling System 7 (SS7) [network] protocol.

13. (Amended) The [device] system as recited in claim 10, wherein the [means for blocking further] inter-exchange carrier network comprises:

an Intelligent Services Network (ISN) platform for [retrieving and storing said records from said] accessing the database; and

an Automatic Call Distributor (ACD), under control of the ISN platform, for [routing and switching special service calls, and for blocking special service calls, when said special service calls have an originating number that corresponds to an originating number identification in a special service call number record] further processing the special service call.

14. (Amended) The [device] system as recited in claim 10, wherein the means for entering originating phone number [identifications into said records further comprises] includes[:]

a fraud control console configured to receive [;

wherein] alerts that are generated when [network] traffic in the inter-exchange carrier network exceeds at least one threshold[, and said generated alerts are reported to said fraud control console].

15. (Cancelled) [The device as recited in claim 10, wherein the means for entering originating number identifications into said records further comprises:

an automated fraud control program for determining whether an originating number identification should be entered into said records when network traffic exceeds at least one threshold.]

16. (Cancelled) [The device as recited in claim 10, wherein the database for maintaining at least one record is a Service Management System (SMS) database.]

17. (Amended) The [device] system as recited in claim 10, wherein the special service call number is a "800" number.

18. (Amended) The [device] system as recited in claim 10, wherein the originating number identification is an Automatic Number Identification (ANI).

19. (Canceled) [The device as recited in claim 10, wherein the telephone system comprises at least one Local Exchange Carrier (LEC) and an Inter-exchange Carrier (IXC).]

20. (Canceled) [The device as recited in claim 19, wherein the IXC includes the database for maintaining at least one record, the means for entering originating number identifications, and the means for blocking a special service call; and the at least one LEC has at least one originating number.]

21. (New) A method for preventing fraud in processing special service calls, the method comprising:

monitoring a plurality of special service calls initiated from a common originating number, wherein the special service calls are processed by a first telephone network;

storing the common originating number within a database accessible by the first telephone network if the special service calls generate a fraud alert;

selectively initiating blocking of a subsequent special service call within the first telephone network if the subsequent special service call is from the stored common originating number; and

transmitting the stored originating number to another database accessible by a second telephone network for blocking within the second telephone network.

22. (New) A method according to claim 21, wherein the first telephone network in the monitoring step includes an inter-exchange carrier network, and the second telephone network in the transmitting step includes a local exchange carrier network.

23. (New) A method according to claim 21, wherein the special service calls are associated with a terminating special service number that includes one of a toll-free number, a calling card number, and a special rate number.

24. (New) A method according to claim 21, wherein the common originating number in the monitoring step originates from a private branch exchange (PBX) communicating with the second telephone network.

25. (New) A method according to claim 21, further comprising:
selectively forwarding the subsequent special service call for further processing in an Intelligent Service Network (ISN) platform; and
selectively tearing down the subsequent special service call.